**Key News and Guidance for LPCs**

 *Week ending 5th September*

**Last week’s news stories:**

**PQS Inhaler Disposal Quality criterion**

Community pharmacy contractors **must** now start working towards the ‘Return of unwanted and unused inhalers’ quality criterion to meet the Respiratory domain of the Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS). Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pqs-inhaler-disposal-quality-criterion-are-you-ready-to-start-working-towards-this-from-tomorrow/**

**Inclisiran added to new section of the Drug Tariff**

The **Drug Tariff** will include a new section, **Part VIIIC**, from **September 2021**. This section will set out arrangements of payment for products with a nominal price (i.e where the product's purchase price is significantly lower than its NHS list price). The only product currently listed in Part VIIIC of the Drug Tariff is **Inclisiran (Leqvio®) 284mg/1.5ml solution**. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/inclisiran-leqvio-added-to-a-new-section-in-the-drug-tariff-part-viiic/**

**Directions for 2021/22 Flu Vaccination Service issued**

Community pharmacy contractors meeting the requirements for the provision of the Community Pharmacy Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Advanced Service can now begin providing this service, following confirmation of the signing of amendments to the Secretary of State Directions from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). A National Protocol has also been confirmed to support the flu vaccination programme for 2021/22. This national protocol will enable contractors to better use the skill mix within their pharmacies when delivering flu vaccinations. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/directions-for-the-flu-vaccination-service-2021-22-issued/**

**Updated NMS service specification**

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) have published an updated draft version of the New Medicine Service (NMS) service specification. This service specification is currently working its way through the NHSE&I publication approval process, and the final version will be published in due course. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/nms-updated-service-spec-and-directions-published/**

**NHSE&I PQS guidance published**

NHSE&I has published guidance on the 2021/22 PQS. This guidance provides information on how community pharmacy contractors can meet the gateway criteria and domain requirements. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pqs-nhsei-guidance-published/**

**JCVI advice on third dose COVID-19 vaccination**

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised that people with severely weakened immune systems should have a third vaccine dose as part of their primary COVID-19 vaccination schedule. The Government has accepted this advice. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/c-19-jcvi-issues-advice-on-third-dose-vaccination-for-severely-immunosuppressed/**

**Medicine Supply Notification: Updates**

The Medicine Supply Notifications for [**Chloral Hydrate 143.3mg in 5ml oral solution**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-chloral-hydrate-143-3mg-in-5ml-oral-solution/) **and** [**Metronidazole 0.75% gel**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-metronidazole-acea-0-75-gel/) have been updated.

**Medicine Supply Notification: Nalcrom 100mg capsules**

The DHSC has issued a Medicine Supply Notification for Nalcrom (sodium cromoglicate) 100mg capsules. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-nalcrom-sodium-cromoglicate-100mg-capsules-2/**

**Summary of Drug Tariff changes for September 2021**

Following a number of changes to the Drug Tariff in September 2021, PSNC's Dispensing and Supply Team has produced a summary to help pharmacy contractors and their teams familiarise themselves with the information and take action accordingly. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/summary-of-drug-tariff-changes-for-september-2021/**

**CPCF 2021/22 webinar now on-demand**

PSNC's CPCF Year Three webinar for community pharmacy contractors is now available to watch on-demand. The online event described the funding, services and regulatory details of the 2021/22 agreement, with 97% of attendees reporting that they found it helpful. Watch the webinar: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/cpcf-2021-22-webinar-now-on-demand/**

**COVID-19 cost claims update**

We are pleased to report that the overwhelming majority of community pharmacy contractors submitted a claim for their COVID-19 costs and that the total claimed for is significantly higher than the [**£120 million offered initially to the sector by HM Government (which PSNC rejected last summer)**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/covid-19-cost-negotiations-update-psnc-rejects-initial-offer-and-makes-counter-proposal/). The NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) has been processing these claims, and PSNC is now engaged in urgent discussions with them and DHSC about any outliers that have been identified. PSNC is also demanding that contractors receive a payment for their COVID-19 costs in time for the first repayment of last year’s Advance Payments. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/covid-19-cost-claims-contractor-update/**

**New NHSBSA guidance on patient exemption checking**

Following the lifting of the [**temporary suspension of signatures on prescription forms and tokens**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/end-to-temporary-suspension-of-signatures-on-prescription-forms-and-token-submission-requirements/) on **1 September 2021**, NHSBSA has issued guidance on exemption checking to aid pharmacy teams. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/nhsbsa-guidance-for-pharmacy-teams-on-patient-exemption-checking/**

**PSNC website: Have your say on content structure**

PSNC is undergoing a website overhaul and would appreciate contractors' help to reorganise our website's content structure and menu navigation. To this end, we have created a content sorting exercise to enable site users to get involved in categorising our content. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/psnc-website-have-your-say-on-content-structure/**

**COVID-19 Appendix**

**Remember: Key actions to take during the pandemic**

Contractors and pharmacy teams can take the following actions to ensure they are well prepared:

* Read the [**NHSE&I guidance**](https://psnc.org.uk/the-healthcare-landscape/covid19/contractor-guidance-and-support/) **and implement its recommended actions;**
* Clearly display the [**COVID-19 poster**](https://psnc.org.uk/the-healthcare-landscape/covid19/information-for-the-public/) **at points of entry to your pharmacy;**
* Read your [**business continuity plan**](https://psnc.org.uk/contract-it/essential-service-clinical-governance/emergency-planning/) **and consider whether it needs to be updated to reflect the current and emerging situation;**
* Keep up to date with developments by regularly checking the information on [**COVID-19 on GOV.UK**](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus)**, the** [**NHSE&I Coronavirus Primary Care**](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/) **webpage and checking your NHSmail shared mailbox on a regular basis for updates from NHSE&I; and**
* Where possible, display the [**public health advice posters**](https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101/resources/5016) **on hand washing, face coverings etc.**

**Guidance for healthcare professionals**

The key guidance for health professionals is available on the Public Health England (PHE) section of the GOV.UK website:

[**COVID-19: guidance for health professionals (GOV.UK)**](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus)

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) published guidance for primary care teams on 27th February 2020. This includes a specific document for community pharmacy teams, which takes the guidance already available on the [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus), but contextualises it for the community pharmacy environment.

[**NHSE&I Coronavirus Primary Care webpage**](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/)

The guidance explains how to deal with patients presenting in the pharmacy with suspected COVID-19 infection and preparations pharmacy contractors can take to deal with such a scenario. All pharmacy contractors should read the guidance and then undertake appropriate preparations for dealing with potentially infected patients.